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as symbols of its identity and individuality, if not superiority. The saw '*ār nāḍku nūr pāje*', which might be translated as 'six *nāḍs*, hundred customs', testifies to the great cultural diversity within Coorg.

A *nāḍ* might differ from other *nāḍs* in the matter of the date of observance of important festivals such as the harvest festival and festival of arms. It might also differ in the articles used in the festival ritual: for instance, the plants used in the harvest festival ritual vary in different *nāḍs*, and this is due to the fact that in each area the plants locally prolific are chosen to express a wish for growth.

The various villages of a *nāḍ* co-operate on certain occasions as the harvest festival and the periodical festival of the local village-deity. During the harvest festival, on the day after the village dance (*ūr kōlu*), a dance for the entire *nāḍ* (*nāḍ kōlu*) is held in which all the men of the *nāḍ* take part. Games testing the strength and skill of individuals are also held on this occasion, and this provides an opportunity for the canalization of inter-village rivalry, just as at a festival in a village the games played canalizes inter-*okka* rivalry.

When the bridegroom is marching in state to the bride's house it is customary for the villages in the groom's *nāḍ* to offer him the 'plantain honour' (*bāḷé birudu*): a row of three stout plaintain stems are fixed to the ground near the boundary (*mundalé*) of the village or *nāḍ*, and the groom is asked to cut the stems with his sword. The groom delegates someone to cut the stems on his behalf. The man offering the groom the 'plantain honour' should be wearing a Coorg gown, and he offers the party warm water to wash their hands and feet, mats to sit on, and betel leaves and areca-nut to chew. (Warm water, mat, and betel and nut are all symbols of hospitality and respect in Coorg as elsewhere in India.) If the party arrive at night the host provides them with torches for the road. The groom has to pay a money gift of two *paṇas* (about six annas) to the host in acknowledgement of the honour and hospitality done to him and his party.

A man has a great love for his *nāḍ*. This comes out repeatedly in Coorg folklore. An infant boy, called Chondu, was orphaned, and the *nāḍ* elders had to make arrangements for his care. When Chondu reached the years of discretion he wanted to show how deeply he appreciated what his *nāḍ* had done for him. He deter-

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Guḷika is different from Kūḷi which merely means a spirit or ghost. Kūḷis are troublesome spirits which cause illness, possess people, and have to be propitiated with offerings of food and drink.

XVI

The ancestral house has a special importance to a Coorg: he regards it as sacred, he is bound by very powerful ties to it, and he considers it the proper place where the marriage of a member should be celebrated and where his funeral should be performed. Even today the various branches of an *okka* gather together at the ancestral house during the harvest festival and during the Kāvēri festival. They also gather together for the festival of the local village-deity which may be held annually or biennially, and for the performance of ancestor-propitiation.

The house is swept and cleaned every day, and on special ritual occasions such as a festival or ancestor-propitiation, its walls are colour-washed, and the floor washed with a solution of cow-dung, a common purifying agent all over India. A festival is also a holiday, and the men abstain from agricultural work and perform festival tasks such as hanging up festoons of mango leaves on the lir'el above the main door. Everyone has a bath and changes into clean clothes brought by the washerman. A festival also means a feast and the feast may be either vegetarian or non-vegetarian. All over south India the feasts which are a part of calendar festivals may not include non-vegetarian dishes—this is an idea implicit in Sanskritic Hinduism. Non-Brahmins usually prepare non-vegetarian dishes on the day following the feast.

Coorgs follow other Hindus in preparing purely vegetarian dishes on festival days. Even the ancestors are offered vegetarian dishes at these calendar festivals. But on those occasions which are exclusively devoted to the worship of ancestors meat and pork dishes and arrack are the preferred offerings to them. Some village-deities again require offerings of non-vegetarian dishes and liquor at festivals in their honour.

Another aspect of calendar festivals needs to be referred to here: festivals such as the festival of arms and the harvest festival include games like shooting at a target, running a race, throwing a stone, &c. These games prove an occasion for the expression of the rivalry that exists between the *okkas* in a village or *nāḍ*. Such an

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796 526 578 occasion also canalizes the rivalry that exists in certain forms that are not destructive of the social order. Coorgs themselves treat this part of their calendar festivals as providing an arena for the expression of inter-*okka* rivalry.

596 796 621 Co-operation between *okkas* also receives emphasis at these festivals. Every *okka* in the village (or *nāḍ*) is required to send all the adult males in it to the collective dances which are held at the harvest festival. Again, there is a collective hunt at the end of the harvest festival (and usually at the end of the festivals of the village-deities) to which every *okka* has to send *all* the adult males in it. Failure to do so would result in a fine being levied on the defaulting *okka*.

When the festival of a village-deity is being performed, every *okka* (excluding *okkas* of very low castes) has to send a man to help in festival work such as clearing the weeds growing in the temple compound and on the road along which the deity will be taken out in procession.

There is also a minute division of the ritual tasks among the high caste *okkas* in the village. For instance, the representative of one *okka* carries the image of the deity, while the representative of another *okka* carries a lamp and the representative of yet another *okka* carries the money-box (*cheppu*), and so on. Formerly these tasks were looked upon as privileges, and an *okka* was jealous of the privileges to which it was entitled by tradition and custom.

The village is a unity made up of the various *okkas* in it. The individuality of each participating *okka* and the unity of all the *okkas* in the village[1] are both brought out in Professor Emeneau's description of a dance held at the festival of Bhadrakāḷi at Karavalé-bāḍga near Mercara. Professor Emeneau writes:

> this dance is performed on several days both at the temple and on the dancing-green. In this the essential performers are a male member of each *nāb* [*okka*] in the village, carrying each a *koḍi* or staff surmounted by cloth tied in the form of two cones with their bases together and the apex of one pointing upward. Each performer has the right arm bare and a fold of the turban hanging down his back. If all the male members of a *nāb* should be unable to dance because of age or infirmity, the *koḍi*

[1] Castes like the Poleya are excluded from this unity. It is recognized that such castes perform extremely useful tasks both in day-to-day living and at festivals, but their position in the social hierarchy excludes them from certain positions and tasks. The principle of stratification modifies the idea of the unity of a village.

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the Nandiyaṇḍa *okka* to get the 'prostitute' ready. Elaborate rules 796
are again laid down as to which *okkas* should help each of the three *okkas* concerned to get the 'horse' ready. The punctilious regard for detail is characteristic of the festivals of village-deities.

The Moṇṇaṇḍra 'prostitute' and 'horse' are conducted by the Poleya oracles to the Moṇṇaṇḍra rice-fields, and after leaving them there, the Poleya oracles accompany the Bhadrakāḷi oracle to the Māḷeṭṭira house. Together they escort the Māḷeṭṭira 'prostitute' and 'horse' to the Moṇṇaṇḍra rice-fields. Finally, the entire body proceed to the threshing-yard of the Nandiyaṇḍa *okka*, where they meet the latter's 'prostitute' and 'horse'. At first, the three 'horses' run a race and then the 'prostitutes' follow suit.

The villagers, oracles, 'horses', and 'prostitutes' then proceed to the temple, where they walk round the shrine thrice. The 'prostitutes' and 'horses' perform a dance and this is followed by the villagers dancing the 'torch dance'.

Tengé pōré or 'coconut scramble' takes place afterwards. The [526]
nāḍ- or temple-headman holds a coconut aloft in his right hand, and this is a signal for youths to gather round him. He then lowers his right hand and stretches it horizontally before him. This is a sign for the youths to try and snatch it from him. After snatching the coconut, the man in possession of it has to run a few yards to a stone where he should break it, but before he does this, anyone may pounce on him and snatch the coconut from him. He who breaks it on the stone is the winner. He is given a prize.

The Brahmin priest then worships the goddess, using Sanskrit *mantras*, and this brings the proceedings to an end on the eleventh day.

On the twelfth morning there is an elaborate purification rite which the priest performs before the assembled villagers. The accounts of the money-offerings made on the ninth, tenth, and eleventh days are checked. Out of this sum fees are paid to the priest, oracles, cooks, Mārāya drummers, Paṇika, and Mēda, and Poleya musicians. The Bhadrakāḷi oracle then decides how much money should be spent on the evening's dinner.

The 'village goat' is brought down from the tree, cut up, and cooked into curry along with the 'village fowls'. There is a huge dinner at which all the villagers take part. Toddy is also served at this dinner, as at other village dinners.

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their minds with leadership and precedence. In their folksongs, not only a group of men, but also a herd of cattle and a bunch of flowers have their leaders. And there the usual epithet by which a headman is referred to is *mūpayanda*, which means 'having precedence'. The sense of precedence is ubiquitous: formerly, when caravans from every *nāḍ* went to Malabar every summer, the senior headman's pack-bullocks marched ahead of the pack-bullocks of the others.

Ideas about precedence are expressed on ritual occasions. For instance, most festivals of Coorgs include the sport of shooting at a target (*kuri*): a coconut and, on either side of it, a plantain spathe are tied to the high branch of a tree, and the competitors have to shoot at the coconut from a distance. The headman of the village has the right to shoot first at the target. Again, at the village dance held during the harvest festival, the village-headman, or an expert dancer selected by him, leads the dance. The temple-headman comes next after the village-headman.

At the *nāḍ* dance, which is held a day or two after the village dance, precedence is very important. The dancers of each village forming part of the *nāḍ* gather together at their headman's house, whence they proceed to the *nāḍ* green with band. When the senior *nāḍ*-headman arrives with his men everyone present has to stand up. A mat is spread for him, and others may sit down only after him. If *nāḍ*-headmen from other *nāḍs* come to the dance, they sit to the left of the host *nāḍ*-headman, observing a strict order of seniority between them. Every dancer is provided with a pair of sticks. The host *nāḍ*-headman leads the dance, with the guest *nāḍ*-headmen occupying positions immediately next to him. The temple-headman comes after the guest *nāḍ*-headmen, and the various village-headmen who are gathered there take up positions after the temple-headman.

The guests are received with band when they arrive, and after the dancing and sports are over, they are given refreshments which nowadays consist of coffee, soft drinks, fruits, and betel leaves and areca-nut. Each guest *nāḍ*-headman pays a *paṇa* to the hosts before leaving. The hosts accompany each guest a little distance, the host's band proceeding ahead of the party. When all the guests have left, the villagers conduct their own *nāḍ*-headman in state to his house. They dine in his house, after which they disperse.

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Several competitions are held on the village green. The men are asked to shoot at a target (*kuri*). A variant of this is shooting at a target while running (*ōṭu boḍi*). Three stout plantain stems are planted very close to each other and men are invited to cut through them with one stroke of the Coorg sword. Coorg youths struggle for the possession of a coconut (*téngé pōré*). There is a high-jump competition, and then there is a form of putting-the-shot: the competitors are required to throw a round stone backwards over their heads. He who throws it farthest wins.

All the adult males in every *okka* in the village or *nāḍ* have to co-operate in the collective hunt that is held after the 'festival of arms'. Each *okka* takes its dogs to the hunt. Every *dog* gets a portion of the meat of the animal killed. Every man taking part in the hunt gets a share, and those who hit the game first and second get an extra share each. He who first hit the game is also entitled to the animal's head, while the one who was the first to touch the killed animal's tail is given one of the front legs in addition to his ordinary share.

A man who shoots at an animal must not only hit it, but must draw blood as well. Blood, in this context, is referred to as *nambigé*, which means evidence. Failure to draw blood is punished: thorns are drawn across the bare buttocks of the unfortunate hunter before the assembled members of the hunt.

It was mentioned earlier that a man who killed a panther was entitled to have *nari mangala* performed on the village green, whereas he who killed a tiger was entitled to have it done on the *nāḍ* green.

It was pointed out earlier that Ayyappa, the son of Vishṇu and Shiva, becomes the hunting god *par excellence* in Coorg, roaming the forests at night, whistling to his pack of dogs. Vows are made to him before a hunt, and offerings of clay images of dogs and horses are made before his shrines in the jungle.

The general preference for the martial way of life expresses itself in belief, ritual, and myth. For instance, the Sanskritic belief that an eclipse is caused when the serpent Rāhu tries to devour the sun or moon provides the basis for a characteristically Coorg story. A one-eyed cobra lived in an anthill and near by was a creeper which had put forth an enormous gourd in which lived a hare. A strong wind blew the gourd off the creeper, and it broke when it hit the ground, setting the hare free. The cobra went after the running hare,

Festivals: (1) Huttari

The Huttari is the feast of first fruits. The name is said to be derived from the Malayalam 'pudiyari', or new rice. It occurs at full moon at the end of November or beginning of December. After various preliminary ceremonies, the person chosen to cut the first sheaves goes at sunset to the fields in procession with a lighted torch in a dish of rice carried before him. He has a sickle in one hand and a bamboo bottle of fresh milk in the other. He cuts the sheaf and distributes the stalk to those present, and puts some into the milk. This is carried in procession to the house, the people shouting, "Poli, poli, Deva", that is, "Increase, increase, O God," followed by a blast of the shrill Coorg brass horn. It is truly a national and thanksgiving feast entirely uninfluenced by Brahmanism. It lasts for seven days. It begins with village rejoicings and extends to Nad or district gatherings, and ends every day with the peculiar cane dance of the men and boys to the tune of the most melancholy and monotonous sound of horns, drums and songs. Other games vary the proceedings, but the most interesting part is always the champion fight in playful dance, which often ends in a general skirmish in which the canes are freely used.

(2) Kaylmurtha

The Kaylmurtha is the festival of arms celebrated by the youths and men of Coorg sometime in August. When the hard labours of ploughing, sowing, and transplanting of rice are over, a break in the monsoon spreads its bright light and sunny warmth over the hills and dales, forests and fields in Coorg, when a holiday is most welcome. The Takka of the grama calls some respectable men to accompany him to the astrologer's home. They ascertain the most propitious day for the celebration of the festival.

On the morning of the joyous day, the whole armoury of the house is placed in the verandah, gun and spear, bow and arrow, sword and knife. Some of the young men sit down to burnish the familiar weapons. When this is done, they are carried to a room or central hall, where they are placed in a corner. When the auspicious moment arrives incense is burnt before the weapons, sandal paste is dotted on them in profusion, and a show offering, *Nivedya*, is offered to them and the idols. As soon as the festival is over, the whole house sits down to dinner. The men then proceed with their arms to the village green, *uru-mandu*, to spend the afternoon in shooting at a mark and in athletic sports. The following day is devoted to a hunt in the forest belonging to the village. This is followed by a great hunt of the whole Nadu. It is a repetition of the village hunt on a larger scale. Whatever game is obtained, the man who killed the animal receives a hind quarter and the head. The rest goes to the company. The Kaylmurtha is the most glorious of all festivities to the young Coorgs,

seedlings together, keeping a regular interval of six inches. Before the completion of the largest field, an open space of about ten feet wide is left throughout the whole length. This is the Coorg race-ground, offering good sport which greatly enlivens their monotonous work. From the men employed in work, fifteen are selected for the race on 100 bottles of land. Wearing a pair of short drawers they are eager for the run for which their strong legs qualify them. The signal is given and away they scramble, plunge, and stagger in deep mud, roars of laughter greeting the unfortunate persons who sink in. Having reached the opposite bank, they return in the same way struggling to the winning post. Four or five only win the race. The first-comer is rewarded with a piece of cloth, the second with a bunch of plantains, the third with a jack-fruit, the fourth with a bunch of oranges, and the fifth with parched rice. When all the fields are planted, a feast is given by the landlord.

As a protection against the evil eye, some half-burnt bamboos about six feet long are erected in a line through the middle of the fields. It is now the farmer's business to regulate the water supply of each field, and to fill up the holes made by crabs in the embankments. The weeding is then attended to and failures replanted. At the end of October, when the ears of corn are fully out, small huts on high posts are erected, one for every hundred bottles, for the watchman who guards the crop against wild animals and at times fires a gun to scare them away. In November and December the paddy ripens, and the feast of the first fruits or Huttari is celebrated, after which the paddy may be reaped. The water is drained off the fields. The paddy is then cut down with a sickle close to the ground and then spread out to dry. After six or eight days it is bound into sheaves, carried home, and stacked in a heap, the ears turned inside. In January or February, chiefly in moonlit nights, the sheaves are taken to the threshing floor, spread round a stone pillar in the middle, and trod out by bullocks and buffaloes, when the paddy is winnowed. The best quality is reserved for seed and the rest stored for consumption or sale.

Cardamom Cultivation

The cultivation of cardamoms was formerly second in importance to that of rice, and a fine cardamom jungle at an elevation of 3,000 to 5,000 feet was regarded as a great asset. Cardamom grows in evergreen jungle at an elevation of 3,000 to 5,000 feet, but it requires subdued light for its growth. This is obtained by the felling of trees which let in light. February or March is the time for this, and the shaking of the ground causes the young plants to shoot up in three months. The capsules appear in the third year, and ripen in September or October, when the crop is gathered. A good crop is gathered for seven years, when the felling of another big

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seed. The seed paddy is heaped up on the north side of the house, watered for 3 days, then covered up with plantain leaves and stones, till it begins to sprout. The nursery ground has meanwhile again been ploughed and harrowed, and the water allowed to run off, so that the grain when sown is just imbedded in the soft mud. After 20 or 30 days the blades have attained a height of about one foot and the seedlings are ready for transplanting. Beautiful as are corn and clover fields in Europe, there is no vegetation there that surpasses in beauty the brilliant green of a rice nursery. The eye is irresistibly attracted to these bright spots and rests upon them with the utmost delight!

Regulated by the monsoon rain the rice-transplanting takes place during July and August. The women, covered with leaf-umbrellas, called Goragas, that rest on the head and protect the whole of the body, pull out the plants from the nursery, tie them in small bundles, which are collected in one spot. Meanwhile the submerged fields are repeatedly ploughed and levelled with the Tawe, "till the soil is soft as treacle, white as milk the foaming surface," when all the men of the house, placed in a line and standing almost knee deep in the muddy fields, begin the transplanting in which women are not expected to join. The bundles are conveniently deposited over the field; each man takes a handful of plants at a time into his left and with the right hand presses with great rapidity 6 or 8 seedlings together into the mud, keeping a regular distance of about 6 inches. Before the completion of the largest field an open space of about 10 feet wide is left throughout the whole length. This is the Coorgs' race-ground and offers right good sport which greatly exhilirates their monotonous task. All the men engaged in the work—and 15 are reckoned for a 100 butties of land—may run, but 4 or 5 only obtain a prize. Wearing merely a pair of short drawers, they are eager for the run, for which their powerful

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

243 461 526 legs well qualify them. The sign is given and away they scramble and plunge and stagger in the deep mud and roars of laughter greet the unfortunate wight who tumbles into the mud. Having reached the opposite bank, they return the same way, and hard is their struggle close to the winning post. The first comer is rewarded with a piece of cloth, the second with a bunch of plantains, the third with a jack-fruit, the fourth with a basket of oranges and the fifth with parched rice. [594] When all the fields are planted, a feast for the people is given by the landlord.

243 [989] As a protection against the evil eye, some half burnt bamboos about 6 feet high are erected in a line throughout the middle of the fields. It is now the farmer's business, to regulate the water supply of each field and to fill up holes made by crabs in the embankments. Also the weeding is attended to and any failures are replanted. At the end of [343] October, when the ears of the grain are fully out, huts on high posts are erected, one for every 100 butties, for the watchman who guards the crop against wild beasts and occasionally fires off a gun. In November or December the paddy gets ripe and the feast of first fruits or "Huttari" is celebrated, after which the paddy may be reaped. The water is drained off the fields, the paddy cut down with sickles close to the ground and spread out to dry; after 5 or 6 days it is bound up into sheaves and carried home and stacked in a heap, the ears turned inside. In January or February, chiefly in moon- [435] light nights, the sheaves are taken down to the threshing floor, spread round a stone pillar, fixed in the middle, and trodden out by bullocks and buffaloes, when the paddy is winnowed, the best quality reserved for seed and the rest stored up in the granary, already described, for home consumption and for sale, the price varying from 2 to 4 Rs. a [177] butty. A threshing machine, lately introduced by Lieut. Mackenzie, excited the astonishment and admiration of the

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245 round the stalk, it forms a large bunch numbering from 200
[262] to 300 plantains. The fruit when divested of its skin may be
[251] eaten raw, roasted or baked, or when sliced and dried in the sun, reduced to a kind of flour which is considered very nourishing.

The fruit is supposed to have been the forbidden fruit of Paradise, hence the botanical name of the plant. There is a great variety of plantains, which differ in size, colour and the flavour of their fruit, but all the Coorg plantains seem to be particularly rich in saccharine matter and very nutritious.

[824] The plant is highly esteemed by the natives as the emblem of plenty and fertility and is as such in constant requisition at their marriage and other festivals for ornamenting the en-
[526] trance of houses and temples. Stumps of large trunks occupy also a conspicuous place in their games and amusements, for it is considered a feat of strength to cut one through at a blow with the famous Coorg knife.

248 The *Musa textilis* or "*Manilla Hemp*" Plantain has been
139 introduced by Captain Cole, and I have successfully naturalized it in Mercara. Numbers of shoots have already been distributed for extensive cultivation for the sake of its valuable fibre for cloth and paper-manufacture. The fruit is like the common large plantain, but so full of seeds that it can hardly be eaten.

Along with this plant also *the Rheea or Assam Nettle* (Boehmeria nivea) was introduced, and having successfully reared it in Mercara, I distributed a quantity of roots and cuttings amongst the planters all over Coorg, who find it thriving very well in their sheltered ravines without any further care, but do not yet see how to make the cultivation profitable, owing to the difficulty and expense in preparing the fibre. The plant is indigenous to south-eastern Asia and is known in China as Ma or Chuma and in Assam as Rheea. It is a herbaceous plant, with large, perennial, spreading and

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796 And it appears, that the people can do very well without them.

796 361 Six days before the chief festival of tasting the new rice, all the males from six to sixty years, assemble on one of the Mandus of the Gráma, after sunset. Mandu is the name of the open public place in which business is transacted or festive games carried on. Grámas have generally three Mandus, one called the Punchâyati-mandu for business; a second, Dévara-mandu, on which dances are performed in the name of Bhagavati during the after-Huttari-days; a third, Uru-mandu (i. e. the Mandu of the village) on which the Huttari performances take place.

796 The time of these national games and dances is from sunset till after ten o'clock. The whole male population of the Gráma, except little boys and old men, past sixty, has religiously to attend. The assembly gathers gradually between six and seven o'clock. When the assembly is full, a space is marked out for the performances of the party. At a little [563] distance a band of musicians, two Holeya horn-blowers and [534] two Méda-drummers, sit near a fire, which they have kindled for warming themselves and their instruments. The horns are large and of brass. The drums are a Pare (large drum) and a Kudike-pare (pot-drum of a smaller size).

Three Coorg-men step into the centre of the open space and call aloud three names: Ayappa! Mahádéva! Bhagavati! The men stand in a triangle, their faces towards the centre, [796] their backs towards the company. Ayappa is the Coorg forest-god; Mahádéva, the Shiva of the Hindus, and Bhagavati, his wife.

796 526 The Chandukutti (ball-and-peg-play) now follows. The whole assembly takes part in it, the moon shedding a bright silver-light on the scene. A peg is driven into the centre of the chosen ground. A piece of rope is fastened to it by a loose loop. The people who make this preparation, seize some

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

one, who must hold this rope. A piece of wood, generally of a creeper called Odi, is cut into seven parts, which are called Chandu, i. e. balls. The man holding the rope puts six of these balls in a circle round the peg at a distance of the rope's length, the seventh is deposited close by the peg. The whole company now endeavours to pick off the balls without being touched by their guardian. The player in the centre, always keeping the rope's end in one hand, turns round and round, and tries to touch some one of the aggressors. If he succeed, the person touched must take his place and the play recommences. When six balls are abstracted, the seventh must be moved to the distance of one foot from the peg. When this also is lost, the man has to run through the whole crowd and escape, without being caught, to the Musicians' place. If he reach this asylum in safety, the play is won and finished. If he be caught on his way, he is brought before the Nettle-man, an officer of the play-court, who has been waiting all the time, a long Angare-stick—a large fierce nettle—in his hand, for the victim. His hands and feet are well touched and the play ends. Now the assembly perform different kinds of plays and dances, representing the wars which in ancient times appear to have been waged between people of different districts. A man is wounded; a physician is called, who prescribes for him. Another wounded man dies, and Holeyas are called to invite his friends to the funeral. A scene of demoniacal possession is acted. The funeral is performed. Now stories are told of incredibilities. "I saw the other day a little hare attacking a tiger and breaking its neck." Reply: "Did you? I saw a buffaloe flying over the mountains," etc. Three men invoke again Ayappa, Mahádéva and Bhagavati. Dances follow, accompanied by the beating of sticks keeping time with the music of the band outside. Feats of gymnastic strength and agility follow, and another invocation of the three deities concludes the performance.

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796 when they have arrived at the place of meeting, they sit down in [535] groups with the children, and look at the dances performed by the men, who go through the evolutions of Coorg saltation, beating small rattans, of which they carry one in each hand, while they move to the time of a music, which proceeds from a group of Holeyas, stationed between the assembly of the Coorgs and that of their own people, who enjoy themselves, in the same fashion as their masters, at a little distance.

[536] Theatrical performances are added. Brahmans, Moplas, Voddas (tank diggers from Orissa), Gadikas (snake dancers), Jógis (represented by little boys), play through the village.

796 After dinner, on the ninth day, the Nádukólu begins. 526 This is an assembly of the whole district. Every thing is done as at the Urukólu, only on a larger scale. At these [634] assemblies, while the monotonous music plays and the large [535] circle of dancers moves in the measured stick-dance, a couple of men from different grámas and armed with a small shield and a long rattan, step from opposite sides into the ring with a shout of defiance and keeping time with the music, they approach and evade each other, swinging their rattans and dealing blows, aimed at the legs and with their shield warding them off, but often the players get so excited, that their single stick sham combat ends in a mutual severe flogging, 796 which has to be stopped by the spectators. At five the parties from the different villages separate and go home.

[535] In the afternoon of the tenth day, the Dévarakólu (stick-dance in honor of Bhagavati) takes place in every village. [574] The entertainment is the same as on the two preceding days. Dinners are held at different houses of appointment, and terminate on the 11th day with a large public dinner that is given, on some open plain in the forest when the musicians, bards, drummers, Holeyas and Médas unite their exertions to give eclat to the festivity.

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796 piece given to him into a copper vessel, held by the Tantri.
[782] With the setting sun the business of the day is concluded.

The morning of the eighth day is devoted to the delivery of votive presents, as on the preceding day. At ten o'clock
[535] dances are performed by the young men, as on the seventh day. This continues till two o'clock, when all the good shots
796 assemble for shooting at a mark. A cocoanut is hung up in
• 526 some tree between two plantain-bunch-tops as a mark. He who hits the nut, is rewarded with a present of three annas and the honor of the name of a good marksman. Then one of the Takkas, or the Coorg-dancer before Bhagavati, distributes a number of cocoanuts (of which there is an abundance, as every family must bring one or two) to the young men. One seizes a nut between his hands, others try to take it out of his grasp. In a few moments the whole ground is filled
796 with parties struggling for cocoanuts. He who succeeds in forcing the nut out of the hands of the original possessor,
[788] carries it away as his prize. At three o'clock the idol-procession takes place again, after which all the men go with the idol to the river or the tank, to bathe the goddess and themselves.

Ninth day. From each house one person appears at the temple, bearing the yearly money-contribution, which is deli-
[794] vered to the Takkas. The collection being made, the salaries of the temple-officers and servants of the temple are paid.
[574] Then the Brahmans give a good, undefiled dinner of pure vegetable dishes, to their Coorg supporters, first, of course, eating themselves, and leaving the rest to their friends. This temple dinner is the last act in the Bhagavati festival.

527 **d. The Keilmûrta festival.**

The Keilmûrta festival is a very different affair, altogether
[787] a Coorg business. Early in the month of Leo (July—August) the Takka of the gráma calls some respectable men to

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accompany him to the house of the astrologer. They enquire of the wise man, what will be the most propitious day for the celebration of the Keilmúrta. By the sage's answer the day of joy for the village-youth is fixed. The hard labours of ploughing, sowing and rice-transplanting are over, there is a lull in the monsoon, and now and then a most lovely day spreads its bright light and sunny warmth over the hills and valleys, forests and fields of Coorg. The people have long been at labour in their fields and houses: a holiday is now most welcome. On the morning of the joyous day, the whole armoury of the house is collected in the verandah, gun and spear, bow and arrow, sword and knife. Some of the young men sit down to burnish the familiar weapons. When this is done, they are carried to some room or to the centre-place, the Nadumane, and there placed in a corner. They wait now for the muhúrta, the propitious time, assigned by the astrologer. At the right moment incense is burned before the weapons, sandalwood-paste is dotted upon them in profusion, and a show-offering of rice and other food (nevédya) is made to them, as to idols. As soon as this ceremony is over, a mat is placed before the weapons, and the whole house sits down to dinner. After the meal, the men take their arms and proceed to the Urumandu (village-green) to spend the afternoon in shooting at a mark, and in athletic exercises. When the cocoanut has been hit, some of the company jump over a rope extended four or five feet from the ground. After this exercise, plantain-trees are fixed upon the ground, standing three deep. Now the strength of arms and the goodness of knives are tried. He who succeeds in cutting through three plantain-trees at one stroke, carries away the palm. Then round, heavy stones, placed on the Mandu for the purpose, are lifted and thrown, or put as in Scotland, over the head by such as are strong enough. The evening has now set in, and the company disperses. On the following morn-

522 [787] 527 41 [787] [782] 527 526